

B-1B Lancer software upgrades graduate DT&E evaluation

Article by 1st Lt. Brooke Davis
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2/25/05 – EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. – A B-1B test program that combined testing of the Software Sustainment Block, or SB 10, upgrades along with integrating the 500-pound Joint Direct Attack Munition, or GBU-38, is expected to be completed Thursday.

Members from the 419th Flight Test Squadron completed the last SB 10 sortie Tuesday in a flight to the Utah Test and Training Range that accomplished test points ranging from radar targeting to weapons employment, said Capt. Paul Harmer, 419th FLTS B-1B, lead flight test engineer.



During the SB 10 upgrades, testers performed regression testing to verify that previous weapon employment, radar and navigation capabilities were not affected by the new software.

"This final SB 10 mission was planned by the aircrew and executed as an operational mission as a graduation exercise for the software upgrades," he said. "The next step is to turn the upgrades over to operational testers for Force Development Evaluation. We have a combined operational and developmental test force here so that operational pilots get a taste of what's coming to them, and operational testers have been able to be a part of our test missions."

Along with radar targeting and six JDAM weapon releases, testers accomplished electronic warfare functionality. Human factors, or systems controlled by the operator, were evaluated as well, said Ray Hungate, 419th FLTS B-1B program manager.

The Weapons Systems Officers evaluated new displays and pilots evaluated chaff and flare dispensing capabilities, explained Captain Harmer. Integrated systems were also evaluated in a more operational scenario during the flight.

In the final GBU-38 developmental test and evaluation flight scheduled for Thursday, testers will release six inert GBU-38 JDAMs at the Naval Air Warfare Center China Lake, Calif.

With the conclusion of this program, DT&E testing will continue at the 419th FLTS with the Dual Central Processor Unit Module program. The program will upgrade software and hardware by splitting the software into two different processors. This will ultimately allow the aircraft's systems to run faster, more efficiently and reduce regression testing, said Captain Harmer.

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